Links of Love

MEDITATIONS ON THE ROSARY

Francis Friedel, S.M.

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Short Meditations on the Rosary

by

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DEDICATED TO THE LOVING MEMORY

OF MY

FATHER AND MOTHER

FOREWORD

As far back as the thirteenth century, Our Blessed Mother placed a powerful weapon in the hands of St. Dominic in order that he and those associated with him could combat the heretics of his day - enemies of the Church and of mankind as much as the Communists today. Pius V used this same weapon to defend the West against aggressors from the East in the sixteenth century, when Europe was threatened by a flood which would have destroyed Christianity and civilization. In a quiet cave along the Cave River in the small town of Lourdes in 1858, the Immaculate appeared to a fifteen-year old girl, taught her to say the rosary, and communicated to her the great message of prayer and sacrifice. Today at this spot stands the basilica of the Holy Rosary, with its fifteen chapels each depicting in glorious mosaics a mystery of the rosary.

In our own day, Our Lady has again come to the rescue of the world, which is being engulfed by man's pride and greed. This time she clearly proclaims herself to Lucia, Francisco, Jacinta at Fatima as the "Queen of the Holy Rosary". Here again, her great weapon in time of need is the rosary.

Today, in this country, there is going on a

crusade that is spreading through the world: the crusade of family prayer, with the rosary as as its medium. With the family crumbling, a bulwark has to be raised; it is the rosary that will stay the inroads of divorce and infidelity. The family that prays together will stay together. Each one of us can contribute to the strengthening of the family by making family prayer a part of our daily lives. We can become apostles of family prayer.

In order to stimulate fervor in the recitation of the rosary, a series of meditations on the mysteries of the rosary is here presented. They are prepared with the teen-ager in mind but can be used by any person, lay or religious. They can be used for the month of October or at any other time of the year.

They are divided into two broad groups. Each meditation considers one of the mysteries of the rosary. The first set offers a meditation on the mystery itself and attempts to center consideration about the role our Blessed Mother plays in bringing Christ to souls. The second group attaches a special fruit to each mystery and dwells on the virtue or quality to be developed from the consideration of the mystery. Thus each person will strive to develop the Christian life to the fullest extent under the guidance of our Blessed Mother.

Now just a word about meditation. . . At the first sound of this word people get frightened. This, they say, is only for religious who can afford to put in a half hour or an hour a day in the formal practice of such an exercise. This is beyond the range of ordinary lay people and is certainly not for teen-agers. Don't be frightened. With the help of this booklet it should not be difficult at all. You don't have to take out of your day more than a few minutes—two or three—to make a daily meditation. If you can think, if you know how to talk—and I'm sure you can do that,—if you know how to pray, then you should have no difficulty. Just think of yourself talking to our Blessed Mother in an informal, familiar way. Read over these few simple thoughts suggested here. . .slowly. . . deliberately. . .prayerfully. . .make them your own.

May our Blessed Mother, the Seat of Wisdom, inspire you with a love of mental prayer, so that she may bring you closer each day to herself and to Jesus and make you instrumental in spreading Christliness among many souls.

Jesus! Mary! Souls!

INTRODUCTION

MARY'S PLAN—MY PLAN

Mary's Plan

She is my spiritual mother; she has brought me forth to the supernatural life as she has brought Christ forth to His natural life. . .

She desires to place me in the bosom of her maternal tenderness to form me to the likeness of Christ. . .

Like St. Paul she can say to me: My child, how I am in labor until Christ be formed in you. She wishes only one thing — to make me another Christ. . .

Since I am another Christ I must take on the attitudes, the sentiments, the wishes, the thoughts of Christ: I must think, judge, will, work, suffer like Christ. This is perfection, sanctity, holiness to which I am called. . .

In turn, since I am another Christ, I take on also the feelings, the love, the devotedness, etc. of Christ toward His Mother. This is Filial Piety —not just another devotion but a whole way of life. . .

In view of these truths, I must associate myself with Mary in her mission in the world — to bring the world to Christ and Christ to the

world. . . I have to become an apostle of Mary. . . Like her I must show Christ to the world in my own life and in my activities. . . I must influence my milieu. . . I must use my competence to bring the Christian influence into the lives of others. . .

My Plan

1. To place myself under the direction and guidance of our Blessed Mother to be formed by her to the likeness of Christ.
2. To consecrate myself wholly to her and to her service in whatever sphere of life I may be.
3. To take on the sentiments of Christ with regard to His Mother. I will frequently say this prayer: O Good Jesus, by the love with which Thou lovest Thy Mother, I beseech Thee, grant that I may truly love her as Thou truly lovest her and desirest her to be loved.
4. To nourish my spiritual life constantly and keep myself always in the state of grace:
   a. to say my daily prayers morning and evening;
   b. to say the rosary every day in my family;
   c. to go to confession and Communion at least weekly;
   d. to try to make a retreat once a year;

e. to get into the habit of a three-minute daily meditation, which I can make at some free moment;
f. to do some spiritual reading.

5. To make a perfect act of contrition every night before going to bed; also to pray every day for those who are going to die that day; to pray each day for a happy death.
6. To give the example of practical Catholicity within my family, among my friends and acquaintances, at work, in business, in recreation.
7. To try to bring at least one convert into the Church.
8. To be interested in my parish church, which is the gateway of grace.
9. To associate myself with others in carrying on programs that are truly apostolic — that build up a stronger faith and love in myself and others, that will help to bring back weak or lapsed Catholics to the practice of their faith or that will remove prejudices in non-Catholics or attract them to the faith.
10. To become a Christopher in the full sense of the term that men may see in me another Christ and to bring Christ to all the strategic areas of human life where I have competence and influence.

PRAYER BEFORE MEDITATION

Holy Spirit, come, dwell in my soul. Enlighten my mind that I may know; inflame my heart that I may love; strengthen my will that I may do what is right.

Virgin Mother, be at my side during this meditation.

My Jesus, I believe that You dwell in my heart by your grace and sacramentally when I receive you in Holy Communion. I adore you as my God, and Creator. . . In You I live, move, and have my being. I give myself wholly to You and Your service. May I be faithful to You this day. Be merciful to the holy souls in purgatory and to all who are in their agony and are to die today.

PRAYER AFTER MEDITATION

Thanks, O my Jesus for the graces you have given me during this brief and holy conversation. Pardon any failings of which I may have been guilty.

Virgin Mother, I place my resolutions for today in your hands. Here is what I have to watch today.....Here is what I propose to do..... Obtain for me the grace to be faithful. I intend a few times today to visit Jesus and you within my soul and, if possible, to make at least one visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

I believe. . . . .

O Mary, you are the Queen of the Holy Rosary. This month is dedicated to you under that title. You declared yourself to be such at Fatima; at Lourdes you proclaimed yourself the Virgin conceived without sin but at the same time taught and encouraged the devotion to the Holy Rosary. Keep with me during this month, sweet Mother, that I may make it truly one wholly dedicated to you.

For me, as a Catholic, my rosary must be the emblem of my faith; by it, men will recognize me as a Catholic; should anything happen to me, dear Mother, let the beads serve as a silent signal to call the priest to my side. May I grasp the beads in my fingers as I plead with you to pray for me at every moment, at this moment, and especially in the moment of my death.

Each time I say the rosary, I begin it with the Apostles' Creed, the Symbol of Faith. Herein is contained the summary of all that I hold to be true as revealed to me by God and proposed to my belief by your Son's Holy Church. If someone

were to ask me what I believe, I need not hesitate; I would simply clearly profess my faith in these words of the Creed: I believe in God the Father, in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, in the Holy Spirit. Make my faith firm, simple, enlightened, living.

As I grasp the crucifix, I renew my profession of faith made for me or by me at my baptism. I believe in God, my Creator, Who has made heaven and earth and all the universe; Who has made all things, animate and inanimate; Who thought of poor me from all eternity and willed to give me life of the body and life of the spirit; Who raised me up with the rest of men from the natural level to that of a sharing in the divine nature itself through grace. Mother, thank God the Father for His great goodness to me; praise Him; place your faith with mine and offer my feeble faith to Him.

Mother Mary, teach me to express my faith in your Divine Son, Jesus Christ, who was made flesh in your blessed womb, who was born into the world, in order to complete the work of our redemption by dying for us on the cross. How your heart must have glowed in contemplating this Son of yours day after day in intimate association with Him. Blessed were you because you believed. . . . . I believe in Jesus Christ, your Son, my Lord.

Spouse of the Holy Spirit, give me faith in this Blessed Spirit, the Love of the Father and the Son. He inhabited your being more fully than any other being on earth; you were filled with this Spirit, you were animated with His love more than any other creature was capable of. Beg of Him for me a strong, living faith that each day my life might reflect fully my beliefs. O Mother, I believe; help my unbelief; increase my faith.

Blessed Mother, thank your Divine Son for granting me the faith for no merit on my part; thank Him for preferring me to so many others in permitting me to receive and keep the gift of faith. Help me to appreciate this above every treasure in the world. Never let me lose it or allow it to grow weak.

Every day during this month and every day throughout my life, I want to say your rosary, dear Mother. Teach me to meditate on the joyful, the sorrowful, and the glorious mysteries of your life which are at the same time, the mysteries of the life of Jesus.

Dear Mother, I will say the rosary every day and become an apostle of the rosary, particularly in encouraging the family rosary. Help families to pray together and thus give the guarantee that they will stay together. . . .

1. Gabriel Speaks to Mary. . . . .

Let me behold you kneeling in prayer, Mother Mary, when the Archangel Gabriel came to visit you to announce to you that you were to become the Mother of God and, by that token, to become the Mother of men. You were then a young girl, possible fifteen when the heavenly visitor steps into your room. He begins his message with a salutation dictated to him by God Himself. Were words such as these ever heard before and applied to any creature by God? Hail, full of grace. . . the Lord is with thee. . . blessed art thou among women.

So the Angel speaks to you as the messenger of God. Then he assures you not to be afraid because yours is a great mission to accomplish on earth for the benefit of all mankind. Man had fallen and now the moment had come to effect the restoration of mankind to God's favor and love. The Angel tells you that you are the instrument chosen by God for that purpose, not a passive instrument but a voluntary agent; you are to be the Mother of God, for the Second

Person of the Trinity had offered Himself to the Heavenly Father as the Victim of Expiation for mankind; He, the Godhead would assume our human nature and thus through the union of divinity and humanity, the chasm would be bridged between God offended and offending man.

Gabriel explains to you that this can be done without the cooperation of man but through the operation of the Holy Spirit. The proposition is presented to you; will you or will you not accept to be Mother of God, Mother of the Redeemer, Mother of the One to be Crucified? . . . The world hangs breathless over your decision. . . It is forthcoming at once. . . "Be it done unto me according to thy word". . .

A miracle takes place. . . The Son of God becomes man in your womb. . . You are the Mother of God but, you become also the mother of men, the mother of all Christians and the co-operator in their salvation. You are at this moment the Mother of the Mystical Body. At the instant in which Jesus was conceived, you accomplished the generation of the Mystical Body. . . By your consent to the Incarnation of the word, you contributed to the work of our Redemption and devoted yourself to our salvation.

Blessed Mother, we are truly your children for you have brought us forth to the supernatural life. . . you have a true maternal care for us. . . you have a tender affection for us. . . you love us as a true Mother.

With Christ, I must be another Christ, another son of Mary. . . Your ambition is that I, who have been brought forth by your charity after Christ, be so united with Christ, that with Him I may be but one son, one and the same Christ. This means, Mother, that I must be a saint and a great saint.

Good Jesus, by the love with which You love Your Mother, I beseech You, grant that I may truly love her as You truly love her and wish her to be loved.

I will slowly say the Hail Mary and stop at each phrase for a moment. . .

2. *Mary Visits Elizabeth. . . . .*

As the Angel pointed out to you, Blessed Mother Mary, how it was possible for you to become the Mother of God and remain a virgin, he gave you a sign by which the reality of these events was to be confirmed. He told you that your cousin Elizabeth, already somewhat advanced in years and up until then childless would bring forth a son who was to be the forerunner of your own Divine Son. As soon as the Angel had left you, you went "in haste" to the mountain country where Elizabeth and Zachary, her priest-husband, lived, to render her the services she would need. This was a considerable journey for you on foot; no conveniences for you such as we are accustomed to today. Hardships and dangers would not hold you back; you had a mission to accomplish.

When you arrived at the home of Elizabeth and Zachary, it was Elizabeth who gave expression of her devotion to the Mother of God. If we seek for the manifestation of devotion in Scripture, we find it in the words of the Angel; we find it again in the words of your cousin. How is it that the Mother of my Lord should come to visit me? Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. Elizabeth by divine inspiration, picks up the words of Gabriel and

continues to complete the first part of the Hail Mary. Can greater words of praise be uttered? Full of grace. . . blessed among women. . . blessed the fruit of thy womb. . .

The Incarnate Word was cradled in your bosom. As you brought Jesus near to Elizabeth, John the Precursor hidden in the womb of his mother, recognized you and leaped for joy. According to general belief, it was at this moment that he was cleansed from original sin even before his birth and sanctified in his mother's womb. This is your mission, Mother — to bring Jesus to souls — and as He approaches them they are cleansed and made holy.

Your own heart overflowed with love and gratitude to God that you burst forth into that magnificent canticle which the Church has adopted as her own: My soul doth magnify the Lord. . . my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. . . for He that is mighty hath done great things in me. . . and holy is his name. . . He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaid.

Help me, Mother, to be a true Christ-bearer also, to bring Jesus to souls to sanctify them. . .

3. *Jesus is Born in Bethlehem. . . . .*

God's ways are mysterious. The Prophet had foretold that you were to bring forth the Son of God in the town of David but you were living at Nazareth, sweet Mother Mary. In God's design a pagan emperor wishing to take a census of his vast empire issued an edict that all people should be registered; this meant that you and Joseph, who were of the house and family of David, had to go to Bethlehem. Your time was drawing near to give birth to your Child but you don't question God's will as expressed to you by a pagan superior. You and Joseph quietly prepare for the long, tedious journey in the dead of winter.

No one would give you any place to stay and bear your Child, Who is the God-Man. He came unto His own and His own received Him not. . . Nothing but refusal at Joseph's request. . . You must finally take refuge in a cave where animals took shelter. Here in the darkness takes place the most important event in history. The Word was made flesh and makes His dwelling among us.

Though Jesus was born in a lonely stable, the event of His birth did not go unheralded. Again it is your mission to present Jesus to

souls, to men of good will who are willing to listen to His good tidings.

The angels announce His coming to poor, humble shepherds. They speed to Bethlehem and find the Child wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. Like the monstrance, you hold the Child in your arms and show Him to these good souls that they might express to Him their adoration, their love, their thanksgiving. . . These, in turn, pass on the good news to others who must have come to witness the marvels that had taken place. What do they find? A beautiful young girl, a virgin-mother, showing them the Creator of the world. Then, as always, you draw men to Jesus.

The poor and the humble are the first to be invited to the crib-throne of Jesus but there are others who are poor in spirit and meek and humble of heart, though wealthy in this world's goods. The wise men from the East are drawn by a star to Jesus' feet; there they find you with Him as always. . . "They find the Mother and the Child". . . The shepherds give of their poverty but they give; the Magi give of their wealth — gold, incense, myrrh; all must give of their love, their adoration, and their sacrifice.

You were the instrument of God to bring the greatest Christmas gift of all to the world. . . make me too an instrument of God in helping to

bring Jesus to the souls of men. . .

Let every day be for me a Christmas day, because each day brings Christ to me in the Mass; let the fragrance of the grace of the Mass penetrate every thought, sentiment, emotion, action, volition of the day. You have made me another Christ, make me a truly worthy son of Mary.

4. Jesus is Offered in the Temple. . . . .

Blessed Mother, you would not dispense yourself from the Law of Moses even though your Son and you were above the law. This Law called for a journey to the Temple to be purified. How could the ceremonies of the Old Law purify you who were sinless in every way? Conceived without sin, free from every stain of sin, virgin of virgins. . . You bore in your arms the Author of the Law, yet He wished to share in the fulness of our nature, in all things save sin, in order to cleanse that nature from sin; you, too, would share with Him in the consequences of fallen nature in order to lift it up. . . .

While fulfilling the prescriptions of the Law in offering Jesus who was to be the first-born of many brethren, and redeeming Him by making the offering of the poor, you were especially con-

cerned again with bringing Christ to souls of good will. This is your mission always, dear Mother — that of co-redemptrix, that of bringing Christ into the lives of men and women.

This time it is the aged Simeon who had been assured by the Holy Spirit that he could not die until he had seen the Holy One of God. Simeon was led by this Spirit into the Temple. Many others saw Mary and Joseph and the Child and assumed it was no more than an ordinary couple bringing their baby-boy to offer him to the Lord. But Simeon, inspired by the Holy Ghost, saw beyond what mortal eyes can see; the Holy Spirit must have told him: this is the one, the Expected One. As he took Jesus into his arms, the desires of his life were fulfilled. . . now he was willing to pass out of this life. . . he had seen the Light unto the revelation of the Gentiles. . . and the glory of Israel. . . his eyes had seen his Savior.

He had a message for you, Blessed Mary, a sad message: the sword of sorrow would pierce your heart; in the midst of your joy of the moment there is to be the shadow of the cross. While there is sorrow and sadness there is the quiet of peace and joy.

Anna the prophetess, had spent many years of her widowhood close to the Temple of God; she, too, was privileged to receive the word of the Holy Ghost that her Savior and the Savior of the

world had finally come and she was gifted beyond measure with the privilege of looking upon His face. She and Simeon went forth announcing the good news. How many listened to them and prepared themselves for the time when this baby would grow up and show Himself publicly to the world and proclaim His divinity and His mission as Redeemer?

Am I, too, one of these who receives warnings of grace; for a moment I am stirred up and promptly forget or grow slack both in God's service and in my function as an apostle to help bring souls to Jesus through you. . . I will go out and, by the example of my life as well as by my words, show forth Christ in me.

5. Jesus is found in the Temple. . . . .

After manifesting Jesus to choice souls such as Simeon and Anna in the Temple, O Blessed Mother, you and Joseph kept Him close to you in the intimacy of the family. You gave Him the care that every loving mother gives a loved child; you watched Him grow from babyhood into childhood; you taught Him to speak and to walk; how it must have thrilled you and Joseph to see Him grow mentally and physically. How it thrilled you when for the first time He called you "Mother".

He was the most obedient of children; each day He shared in the little household chores. As He grew older you taught Him to read; His text-book was the Holy Scripture, the word of God being read by God's Word.

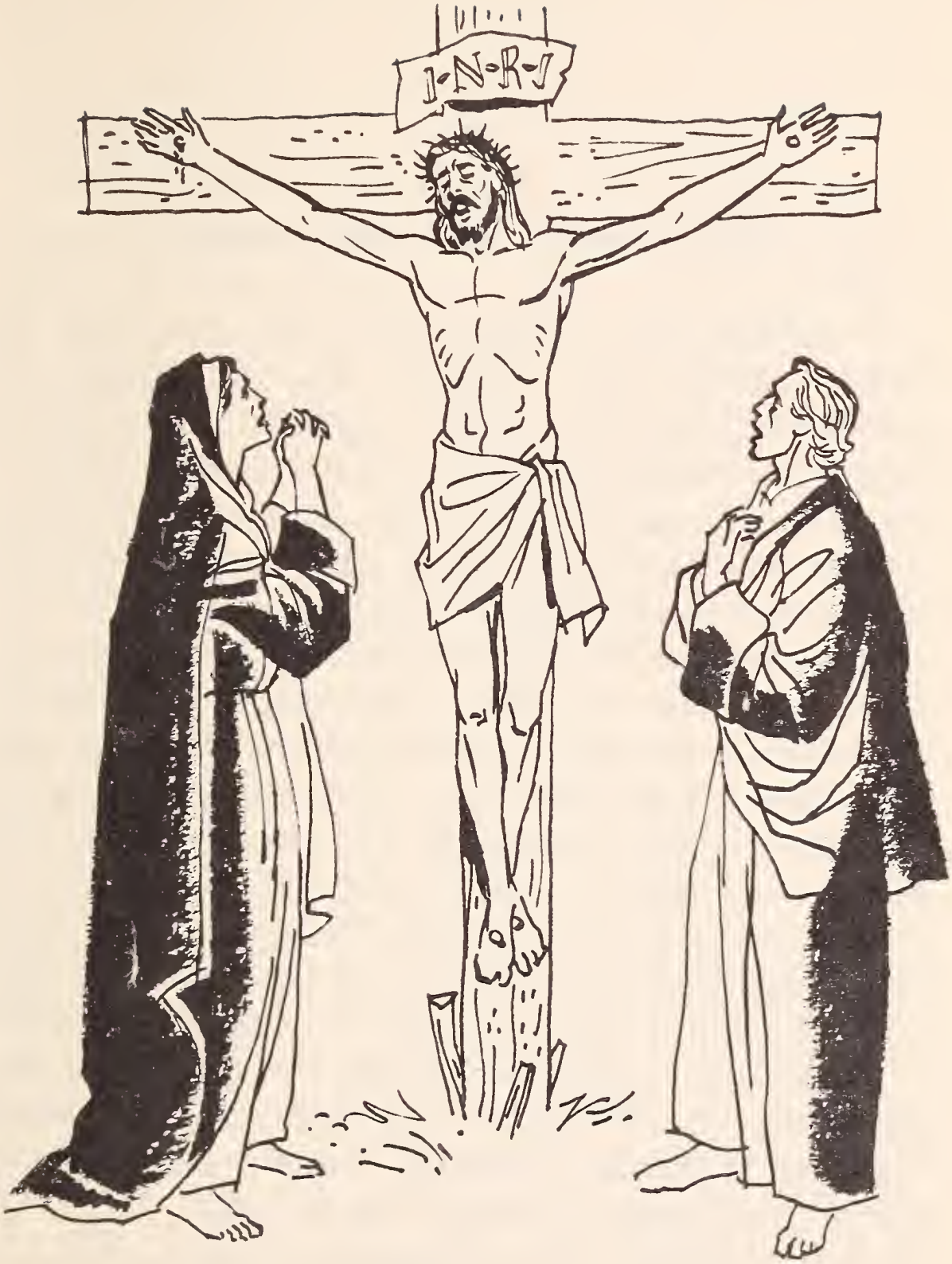
The years passed all too rapidly and soon Jesus had reached the age of twelve, the age when the Jewish boy was to take upon himself the responsibilities of observing the requirements of the Jewish law; he was becoming a spiritual adult. Here for the fourth time you were manifesting Him to souls, whom He wished to sanctify and transform them into Himself and into apostles.

After fulfilling the requirements of the law with relation to the Paschal feast, you and your friends were returning home; you had not noticed that Jesus was not with the group. Only at the end of the day when the families grouped together for the evening meal and rest, you became aware that He was not around. You and Joseph became anxious; all your inquiries as to His whereabouts were useless. The two of you had to go back to Jerusalem and after searching in vain for three days, you chanced to come back to one of the Temple rooms where the doctors of the Law met; there was your twelve-year old boy living proof of the greatest learning; He was asking and answering the questions of these learned men of the law, astonishing them by the wisdom of

His answers; never had they heard so much learning and that from a stripling of a boy. Where did He get His learning? Here was the Word of God revealing Himself to the leaders in Israel. I wonder what their reaction was. Did they just go about their daily routine making an occasional comment about this wonder-boy and, in due time, forgetting Him. Were there some who about eighteen years later would recall this memory and become one of His followers?

But for you at the moment, Mary, there was only one thing: you had your Boy back. Your anxiety was at an end. When you seemed to reproach Him for causing you this worry, His simple, clear answer was that He had to be about His Father's business. It was like giving a pre-view of His mission to come.

Mother Mary, your grief at the loss of Jesus might be compared to the grief that souls should experience when they have lost Jesus by sin; but, unfortunately most souls are hardly conscious of what a great loss is theirs. Let me not be separated from Jesus by sin. If I should have the misfortune to fall into sin, let me hasten to return to Him and to feel some of the joy which was yours when Jesus was restored to you.


I·N·R·J

1. Jesus Agonizes in the Garden. . . . .

O Mary, for a long period of time you had Jesus with you. . .During this time He was preparing Himself for His mission. . .during this time, your spouse St. Joseph departed this life in your company and that of Jesus. The day finally dawned when Jesus said farewell and you knew what this parting meant.

A short space of three years was to be devoted to the public ministry. Not all who heard the consoling words of the Redeemer would seek salvation at its source. . .not all who saw His miracles would accept Him as Savior. Your spirit was filled with horror and dread as you saw the mounting envy and hatred in your Son's enemies. What had He done to them and for them, except good? Yet they could no longer stand Him . . .they must rid themselves of Him and consummate His death. . .now was to be fulfilled the prophecy of Simeon. . .the sword was to pierce your heart through and through.

One of Jesus' own disciples betrays Him for a small sum of money. . .Before going forth to His

Passion and death Jesus must still give the final and definitive proof of His love for men by leaving them His own Body and Blood in the Blessed Sacrament and creating the priests to carry on this work until the end of time.

If you did not accompany Jesus into the Garden, Blessed Mother, you were at least with Him in spirit and witnessed the awful agony by which His soul was torn. You heard His anguished cry: My Father, let this cup of suffering pass from me, but if I must drink it, may Your Will be done.

What was it that tore the Divine Heart of Christ in the Garden? He saw the unspeakable sufferings He was to undergo in the Passion. He saw the scourging. . .the crowning with thorns . . .the march to Calvary. . .the nailing to the cross. . .the hour of agony on the cross in the face of a hateful multitude. . .and He shrank, for He was human and feared suffering. Worse than this was the agony of His soul when He passed in review the horrible picture of sin. . .the sins of mankind from that of the first man down to the sin of the last man on earth. . .an overwhelming flood of iniquity. It was because of this that He was giving His life to reconcile sinful man to the all-holy God. Still worse, was the thought that so many would ignore the moving mercy of Your Son who would stretch out His arms in forgiveness but thousands and millions of souls

would pass by the Cross unheeding and march straight on to their eternal destruction in hell.

Constantly you repeat with Jesus, as I must do: Thy Will be done. Every moment of your life, dear Mother Mary, was an act of submission to God's Holy Will. Obtain for me the grace to fulfill God's will in my regard as it is made manifest to me by my parents, teachers, or other lawful superiors.

When sorrow fills my cup to overflowing send the angel of consolation to bring me strength, courage, and confidence.

2. *He was Scourged. . . . .*

Dearest Mother, let me contemplate with you the awful beginnings of your Son's Passion. . . His capture. . .His trial before the High Priest . . .His appearance before Pilate and Herod. . . His being mocked by the servants. . .

Pilate recognized the innocence of Jesus and strove to free Him but he was weak and incapable of resisting the pressure of the enemies of your Divine Son. In the most inconsistent fashion after declaring that he found no cause in Jesus, he went on to say: "I will punish Him and let Him go", and ordered Jesus to be scourged.

Mother Mary, if you witnessed in spirit the

scourging of Jesus, what must have been the terrible reactions to that form of punishment? I can scarcely picture this scene to myself without feeling a chill go through my entire body. What must it have been for Jesus? He was stripped of His garments and fastened to a pillar. Brutal men were employed to administer this shameful punishment which was inflicted upon non-Romans by Roman overlords. Whips of leather thongs, others with bone or metal attached to the ends were used. Here there was no limit as there was in floggings imposed upon Jews where the Law forbade more than forty stripes.

There are inhuman men, worse than beasts, who take a delight in torturing their fellow-men. Such were these who began to shower blows upon the bare shoulders of your Son. Hard, vicious blows struck Jesus' body. . .soon welts were raised. . .then the flesh was opened. . . blood began to flow. . .the flesh was torn into ribbons. . .yet the blows continued. The Divine Nature of Jesus alone sustained His humanity, otherwise He would have died under this terrible torture.

Every blow upon Jesus was reproduced spiritually upon you, Blessed Mary. Each time Jesus was struck, a new sword pierced your own heart. You suffered in union with Jesus for such was the will of the Father that souls might be redeemed

and brought to live the life of Jesus. Never will I have to suffer as much as you did; give me the grace to realize that only through suffering can I hope to achieve eternal happiness. "It was necessary that Jesus should suffer and that thus He could enter His glory". Let me see in my daily little sufferings the shadow of God's Hand lovingly outstretched over me. Let each suffering cleanse and purify me from my sins, help me to expiate my faults, and increase my glory in heaven.

3. Jesus is Crowned with Thorns. . . . .

Mother most sorrowful, let me share with you your anguish of spirit as Jesus is crowned with thorns. . .

Your Divine Son had stood before the Roman governor, Pilate, who questioned him about His claims to kingship. Jesus had told him: "I am indeed a king but my Kingdom is not of this world". The Kingdom of your Son is one of hearts and souls. . .one of peace and of love. . .

The soldiers who are now in charge of your Jesus take up this idea to conceive a new mode of torture for Him. . .If King He is, let us treat Him as such. . .They find an old purple mantle and drape it over Christ's shoulders. . .purple

is the color of royalty. . .A reed is placed in His hands to do service for a scepter. . .the symbol of royal authority. . .A king must have a crown . . .So a soldier cuts off branches from a thorn bush and plaits these into a crown, which is forced down upon His head until the thorns pierce the brow of Jesus. . .From every puncture spurts the Precious Blood. . .

And now, the cruel, beastly soldiers pay mock homage to Him who is, in all truth, their King, their Lord, their God, their Master. . .But they don't know it. . .They kneel before Him as though to give Him royal recognition but at the same time they curse and blaspheme Him. . .Jesus, their Creator, submits in silence to this humiliation. . .He could have reduced them to utter helplessness and even nothingness but He endures all this because He willed it so. . .

In union with you, Blessed Mother, I kneel in humble adoration before the thorn-crowned Jesus, my King, the King of all the universe. I acknowledge that in His hands are placed all power and dominion. . .To Him, all creatures, whether they recognize it or not, owe obedience. . .service. . . love. . .

Heavenly Mother, have pity on those especially who have fallen victims to the false attractions of Communism. . .They necessarily hate you and your Divine Son——if they are true Communists

. . .All religion is anathema to them. . .Blessed Mother, it is not in godlessness. . .nor in nature . . .nor in hate. . .that they will find peace. . . Bring them to their knees. . .bring them to the feet of Jesus. . .bend their wills to His Law. . . teach them His love. . .

Give heed to the cries of the millions who are under the tyranny of Communism. . .to those who live behind the Iron or Bamboo Curtain. . .Let them not despair. . .hold out hope of deliverance to them. . .keep the faith alive and strong in them. . .

Pity the children and grownups in our own dear country, who have been brought up on the teachings of secularism and, in consequence, fail to recognize your Son as their true King. . . They ignore God. . .the moral law. . .spiritual and eternal values. . .

Mother of Sorrows, whose heart bleeds for mankind, through the merits of your Son's crowning with thorns, bring all men back to the recognition of His reign over their hearts, for His is a Kingdom of truth and of life. . .a Kingdom of holiness and of grace. . .a Kingdom of justice, of love, and of peace.

4. *Jesus Carries His Cross. . . . .*

Word has reached you at last, Holy Mother Mary, that Pontius Pilate, the governor, is too weak to resist the pressure coming from the leaders of the Jews and has finally given the order for the crucifixion of Jesus. . .He had tried to bargain. . .to compromise. . .Surely they would take Jesus instead of the criminal Barabbas. . .no, they are guilty of the great apostasy. . .If they saw Jesus after the horrible scourging and crowning, the people would be moved to pity — but no, there is only hardness in their hearts. . .They will be satisfied only with the death of the Just One, who had done nothing but good in His whole lifetime. . . Pilate, in sheer despair and hopelessness, makes a vain gesture of washing his hands of the death of Him, whom he, at least, vaguely recognizes as more than human. . .Pilate is afraid. . . PERHAPS the Man whom he is condemning is a King. . .the Son of God. . .He must have been haunted by the thought for the rest of his life. . . But he acts now. . .Jesus is sentenced to die and that by the agonizing death on a cross. . . Such is God's will. . .So man's Redemption is accomplished. . .

Jesus accepts the huge, heavy cross which has been placed upon His shoulders. . .for this

moment He had been waiting. . .for this He had come into the world. . .Courageously, heroically, He starts on His way to the Place of the Skull, although He has already lost so much blood. . . It is now high noon, and He has not had a bite to eat or a drop to drink since the Great Supper of the night before. . .

You are waiting for Him, Mother of Sorrows. . . He comes in sight. . .You go out to meet Him — Mother and Son. . .the most perfect of Sons, very God Himself. . .and the greatest, the holiest of Mothers. . .Do the soldiers give you a moment to embrace each other: "Mother". . ."My Son" . . .? There is an exchange of love in the mere glance. . . Co-Redemptrix, you must share in your soul, what the Redeemer bears both in body and soul. . .

As you gaze at Jesus, you can scarcely recognize your Boy, who sat at your knee, assisted you and Joseph about the house and in the shop, played in the streets, and, as a mature young man, took over the trade of His Foster-father. . . What have they done to Him? . . . His Body is a mass of wounds from head to foot. . .the crown of thorns is still on His head. . . the blood is flowing freely here and there. . .in other parts it has hardened and blackened. . .His divine lips are parched with thirst. . . You cannot help Him. . .

You join the small, oh, so small, band of faithful souls and follow Him on to Calvary. . . You are grateful to Simon for taking up the cross with Jesus. . . You breathe a fervent "Thank you" to Veronica for wiping the face of your Son. . . You weep silently with the holy women who mourn over their Master. . .

During the years following, while you stayed in Jerusalem, you must have gone often over this Sorrowful Way, many a time alone, many a time with John or other disciples. . . Each stone is sacred to you. . . Each spot marked a place of suffering. . .

Mother, I need your help to carry the cross which Jesus gives me to carry. . . I'm a coward. . . I whimper and complain when I have a little to suffer even though my health and strength are good. . . I know of souls who are heroic, happy, and cheerful even though they have much to suffer. . . Let me bear my cross with joy. . . it can never be too heavy. . . and I don't want it to be too light. . . I can't be a follower of Jesus unless I am willing to take up my cross every day and follow Him. . . I accept the challenge. . . I accept the condition of discipleship. . .

5. Jesus is crucified. . . . .

O Blessed Mother of God, you have come to Calvary with Jesus. . . You watch Him being prepared for crucifixion. . . He is stripped of His clothes. . . He is offered a drug to dull the pain but refuses it. . . He is bidden to lie down upon the Cross and He does so. . . His arms and legs are stretched. . . the nails go crashing through the tender flesh of His hands and feet. . . blood gushes out from these new wounds. . . the Cross is put into the hole, dug to receive it, and is raised aloft and fixed in place. . . There is your Son, . . my Brother. . . hanging between heaven and earth. . . a sight for all mankind. . .

And YOU, Mother of the Redeemer,. . . YOU STAND BY THE CROSS OF JESUS. . . With you there is no fainting, no hysteria, no demonstration . . . YOU STAND. . . And your grief and suffering are all the more profound. . . You alone at this moment understand the full import of Jesus' death . . . for at this moment mankind is being born to the life of grace. . .

Years before, at the Incarnation, you had conceived to the supernatural life, the Head and the members of the Mystical Body. . . Now, in sorrow, you are to bring forth all your children to the life of grace. . . Freely you had consented to the fulfillment of the Redemption. . . The sacrifice

now taking place on Calvary is the consummation of the sacrifice begun at the Incarnation. . .

From the Cross, Christ publicly proclaims your Motherhood of the Mystical Body. . .It is not in virtue of the words of Jesus that we are adopted by you to the life of grace. . .This is rather the confirmation of a fact that had already taken place when the Word was made flesh in your womb. . .

Jesus turns to you with a glance of deepest affection and says: "Woman, behold thy Son!" And, turning to John, he says: "Son, behold thy Mother!" Jesus seems to be giving away the last object of His love on earth. . .But there is something more. . .John understands the spiritual significance of these words. . .He represents the whole human race at that moment. . .All of us are to be your children in the fullest sense of that term. . .

We may ask: Is Jesus then no longer to be your Son, replacing Himself by St. John?. . .No, Jesus here wishes to reveal a great mystery to us. . .It is this. . .As Jesus is in us and we are in Jesus, with Him we are but one Son. . .one Christ. . .one Body. . .of which He is the Head and we are the members. . .With Him we are but one Son of Mary. . .one Son of God. . .We are sons. . .Here is established that unity by which your Jesus and all His desciples become one Son of Mary. . .

Teach me, Mother of men, to penetrate more deeply into this great mystery of my incorporation with Christ. . . Give me an understanding of the great truth that you are, in reality, my Mother, and that I am your child. . .

Although grief floods your soul, yet you are one with Jesus Who proclaims to the world His thirst for souls. . . Yours is comparable to His... "My children," you say, "how I am in labor until Christ be formed in you". . . The work of Jesus . . . the work of the Redemption of mankind. . . is now finished. . . Yet, dearest Mother, the great work is just beginning for you to transmit to each soul the redeeming action of Christ. . .

Mother Mary, be a true Mother to me. . . May I become another Jesus toward you. . .

1. Jesus Rises from the Grave. . . . .

Blessed Mother, you endured to the fullest measure the sufferings associated with the Passion of your Son although you knew that within three days He would rise again. . . Whenever Jesus mentioned the details of His Passion during His public ministry — that He would be mocked, scourged, put to death — He would always add: and rise again. . . No one who listened could have any doubt on the subject: Good Friday and Easter must be inevitably connected. . .

Scripture is silent about the first appearance of the Risen Jesus. . . He is the perfect Son. . . It would be most natural for Him to show Himself to you, His beloved Mother. . . What sort of meeting is this? . . . Jesus appears to you in glory. . . Now there is no one to interfere with the outpourings of the Hearts of the Great Son and of the Incomparable Mother. . .

There is no longer anything that can stop Jesus. . . In the hour of darkness, His enemies could fasten Him to a cross, because He wills it. . . He submits to death, because He wills it. . . But now. . . death cannot hold Him down. . . He casts aside its shackles. . . the darkness of the tomb cannot contain Him. . . All is light. . . All is glory. . . All is happiness. . . There is no

longer a single trace of the wounds of the scourging and crowning with thorns. . . Only the marks of the nails in hands and feet and the wound in His sacred side remain for a testimonial of His love. . . Each of these wounds is like a huge ruby, reflecting the brilliance of a thousand lights. . . His face is bright as the sun. . . His garments are white as the fallen snow. . . Who can look upon Him and live?. . . No wonder the guards are struck with terror and lie as if dead . . . They cannot again hold You captive. . . they must give unquestioning testimony to Your Resurrection. . .

But Jesus is yours again, radiant, glorious, and exultant. . . You had waited for this return in quiet resignation and expectation. . . Mother Mary, may we be permitted to look upon this return of Jesus to you. . . How He embraced you as you murmured over and over again: "My Son . . . My Son. . . My God. . . My Lord." Words are not needed when the two most perfect human beings meet. . . heart speaks to heart. . .

Your mission of bringing Christ to souls has begun. . . it will continue to the end of time. . . You are to be the Mother of us all, bringing us forth to the life of grace, forming us to resemble Christ. . .

Let me share with you, O Mary, in the joy you experience as Jesus comes back to life by

His own power. . . Help me to rise to a more energetic spiritual life. . . Keep me from growing cold. . . negligent. . . drifting from grace and fervor. . . Make the life of Jesus within me a true principle of action and of love. . .

Let the Resurrection of Jesus confirm my faith in Him. . . let it strengthen my hope in my own glorious resurrection in the last day. . . let it inflame my love so that my final awakening will be the beginning of an eternal surprise at all the things that God has prepared for those who love Him. . .

2. *Jesus Ascends to Heaven. . . . .*

Those must have been heavenly days, which follow upon the Resurrection of your Son, dearest Mother Mary. . . Again and again He comes to you as He does to the Apostles and disciples. The thrill of seeing Him gloriously risen from the dead is beyond any human description. . . Yet you do not need to see Him to know that your faith has been rewarded. . .

These forty days after the Resurrection are important ones. . . There are many things to be done in the establishment of the Church. . . One of these is the institution of the Sacrament of Penance. . . Jesus communicates the power of

forgiving sins to His Apostles and their successors . . . Perhaps Confirmation and Extreme Unction are also instituted at this time. . . Christ gives some further instructions to His Apostles but leaves the completion of this work to the Holy Spirit. . .

But to you, Mother Mary, Christ is giving a special mission for the days to come. . . As you are the Mother of His natural body, so you are also the Mother of His Mystical Body. . . the Church. . . You are to mother the infant Church in the days that lie ahead. . . days that will be full of trials, troubles, storms, persecutions, death. . . You accept this responsibility with the same willingness and submission as you accepted the mission of being the Mother of God. . .

Christ's sojourn on earth comes to an end. . . He must return to His heavenly Father. . . He must bring with Him the legions of souls, detained in Limbo, because the gates of heaven have been closed to them. . . For so long, they had desired the accomplishment of the Redemption . . . Now, at last, heaven will be open to them. . . Now they may see God face to face. . .

Jesus takes you and many of His disciples to the scene of His Agony. . . the Mount of Olives . . . But today, it is a different scene: not the full moon casting a weird light through the twisted branches of the olive trees. . . not the

sorrow which weighed Him down to earth. . . not the sleepy apostles. . . not the blood which dripped from the pores of His body. . . not His agonizing cry to His Father. . . No, this is something different. . .

You are with Him. . . hundreds of disciples are with Him. . . it is bright sunlight. . . the Mount is bathed in glory. . . all is happiness and joy. . . He has words of consolation for you and for all the rest. . . He is going to prepare places for all of you in heaven. . . "Fear not, I have conquered the world". . .

While Jesus is speaking to all, He slowly rises from the ground, moves higher and higher, until He finally disappears in a cloud. . . Angels come to reassure all of you that your Jesus will come again in power, glory, and majesty. . .

Mother Mary, Mother of mercy, . . . our life. . . our sweetness. . . our hope. . . fill me with the assurance of attaining to the glories of heaven in union with you and your Divine Son. . .

3. The Holy Spirit Comes Upon Mary and the Apostles. . . . .

There must have been a slight tinge of sadness in your heart, Blessed Mother, as you cease gazing at the sopt where Jesus had entered the cloud and you turn about to go back to the Cenacle. There the Apostles and disciples gather about to prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit according to the instructions of your Son. . .Fear of the Jews still fills their hearts but their courage is bolstered by what they have just witnessed. . .Furthermore they know you are with them. . .How long are they to wait for the descent of the Holy Spirit Who will teach them all truth?. . .They don't know. . .It is possible, as some suggest, that your prayers hasten His coming. . .

They settle down to what may be called the first official retreat in the Church. . .This is no new experience for the Apostles because during Christ's public ministry they would retire to desert places for prayer and meditation. . .

Here in the Cenacle they are gathered about you, Blessed Mother. . .They unite with you in fervent prayer. . .From time to time you speak to them of all the things which you had pondered over in your heart during the lifetime of Jesus... You exhort them. . .you encourage them. . .you repeat Christ's words to them. . .

The first novena and retreat of the Church is completed. . . The tenth day has arrived. . . At about nine o'clock in the morning a wind is heart surging about the house in which you and the Apostles and others are gathered. . . Here is a strange phenomenon. . . a great wind is heard but it is concentrated only in this small area. . . nowhere else is it noticed. . . it must have made a strange sound. . . People begin flocking from all over Jerusalem to the center of all this commotion. . . We can speculate on the wild rumors that were floating about. . . The Holy Spirit had His way of broadcasting the birth of the Catholic Church. . . the beginning of the New Covenant and the end of the Old. . .

Within the house, something more remarkable is taking place. . . The Holy Spirit appears over each one in the form of a fiery tongue. . . This is His third manifestation to men: Dove. . . Wind. . . Fire. . .

In the twinkling of an eye, the Holy Spirit completes the work of instruction of the First Pope and Bishops of the Church. . . He stirs them to action. . . The Church begins its work at once, for here are souls ready to receive the message of Redemption. . . The Christ Whom they had rejected and put to death is their God and Redeemer. . . They must now accept Him. . . believe in Him. . . be sorry for their sins. . .

receive His grace through Baptism. . . live His life. . . Many believe and are baptized and the Holy Spirit works marvels in their souls. . .

Spouse of the Holy Spirit, pray the Holy Spirit to fill me with the fiery zeal of the Apostles that I, too, may do my share to preach Christ to the world by word and example. . . Pray that I may be filled with His seven-fold gifts. . .

4. *Mary is Taken into Heaven. . . . .*

Although sinless, dear Mother, you follow the example of your Divine Son and subject yourself to some of the consequences of sin. . . Like Him, you suffer pain of soul and body. . . Like Him, you are to submit to death. . .

You spend the last years of your life with the beloved disciple to whom Jesus dying committed you. . . You watch over the infant Church. . . You see it put to the test of persecution. . . You see it produce its first martyrs. . .

During these years remaining of your sojourn on earth, your desire for direct union with your Son in Heaven increases. . . Your love grows more and more until you can no longer contain yourself for love of Jesus. . .

The Apostles are summoned to your bedside by the mysterious direction of the Holy Spirit. . .

You are not sick but you are about to die and somehow they know it. . . With you, they praise God for all His mercies and goodness. . . With you, they thank God for all the great things He has wrought in you. . . You bless His Name. . . Your martyrdom has been in living, suffering from the prolonged separation from your Son. . . Your waiting to see Christ's Face is like a purgatory. . . You die, that you might live. . . You die. . . to fulfill the debt of nature. . . to glorify God. . . to do as your Son did. . . to finish your course. . . to receive your crown. . .

You die of love. . . It is fitting that love should strike the blow that breaks the bonds uniting soul and body. . . Your soul, inundated by love, longs to be with Christ. . . The ardor of your love has increased from day to day until at length the soul gains the victory and takes its flight to heaven. . . Your death is not something painful or sad but rather a triumph. . . a gentle falling to sleep. . .

Your Son does not wish that your body undergo corruption. . . Your soul had been immaculate. . . totally free from sin. . . wholly spotless. . . It is fitting that your body be spared the decay and dissolution of the grave. . . It becomes your Son to do this for you. . .

Nothing is too high for you to whom God owes His human life: no fullness of grace. . . no

excess of glory. . . Your life was of such purity and sanctity. . . You shared in such great mysteries and miracles that we should be disappointed were your death and what followed, similar to that of other men. . . Could Jesus, Who owed the elements of His human body to you, allow the flesh and blood from which it was taken to see the corruption of the tomb?. . .

In your case, glorious Mother, your Jesus anticipated the final resurrection. . . This is, in substance, what your Assumption means. . . All other men must wait until the last day for their resurrection. . . This is the day of judgment when body and soul will be reunited for all eternity. . . for a happy or an unhappy eternity . . . Jesus, by His divine power, brought your soul and body together and raised you at once to the glory and happiness of heaven. . .

At long last Holy Church has raised this traditional belief in your glorious Assumption to a dogma of faith. . . Christian sentiment accepted it long ago. . . Stir up in me, dearest Mother, a lively hope in my own glorious resurrection in the last day. . . May I hear from the lips of your Son, the Eternal Judge, the sweet invitation: "Come, blessed of My Father. . ."

5. *Mary is Crowned Queen of Angels and Saints. . . . .*

What a triumphant entry that must have been for you, sweetest Mother, as the angels bear you into heaven. . . My imagination staggers as I try to reconstruct certain magnificent receptions that have taken place in the course of history. . . These are mere images compared to the reality of your glorious entrance into heaven. . . All the millions and millions in the heavenly court come to greet you. . . and pay you their loving homage . . . you, the Mother of the Second Person of the Trinity. . . you, the Mother of Mankind. . . the Co-Redemptrix. . . the Mediatrix of all graces. . .

If I can conceive of such a thing, heaven is adorned with a special splendor, as you are to be crowned Queen of the Angels and Saints. . . Queen of the heavens and of the earth. . . Your Divine Son, to Whom all things are subject, wishes to share His dominion with you. . . to enthrone you at His right hand. . . to bring you as close to divinity as is possible for any mere creature. . .

The Father crowns you as His beloved daughter. . . The Son crowns you as His sweet Mother. . . The Holy Spirit crowns you as His chaste spouse. . .

Heaven bursts into song. . . the song of triumph . . . glory. . . praise. . . Alleluias without end. . .

O Queen of Angels, bid your angels come. . . to protect me. . . to escort me safely to my heavenly home. . .

O Queen of the Patriarchs, who foreshadowed the coming of your Son and kept alive the knowledge of the true God and the hope of the Redeemer to come, pray for me. . .

Queen of the Prophets who spoke of you and of Jesus long before you came on earth and who prepared the world for your coming, guide me in my way through this life. . .

Queen of the Apostles, whom you mothered and directed in the early days of the Church, teach me the way of Christ. . .

Queen of Martyrs, whom you surpassed by your own martyrdom, help me to bear the sufferings of life. . . Give me courage to die a martyr's death if Jesus so wills it. . .

Queen of Virgins, exemplar of all virgins, surpassing all by the brilliance of your purity, . . . keep my soul pure and my body chaste. . .

Queen of All Saints, lead me in the way of sanctity. . . form me day by day to the likeness of Christ. . .

Queen of Peace, make the world to understand that there can be no true peace unless Jesus enters into men's thinking and willing and living and loving. . .

1. The Annunciation — — — — Chastity. . . . .

Holy Mother of God and Blessed Mother of men, by the mystery of the Incarnation, obtain for me a love of chastity. . .

When you are told that you are to become the Mother of the Messias, you are troubled for you had vowed your virginity to God. . . You are different from all other Jewish maidens of your day, for they rather seek marriage in the hope that they might give birth to the Messias. . . In your humility, Virgin Mother, you consider yourself unworthy of such an honor. . . Furthermore, you prize virginity so highly that you are willing to forego the privilege of motherhood, even the divine motherhood. . . The Angel explains to you that it is possible for you to be both Virgin and Mother through the intervention of the Holy Spirit, and that He Who will be born of you is the Holy One of God, the Son of God Himself. . .

Since that day of the Incarnation, millions of young men and women have pledged their chastity to God in imitation of your holy example. . . They renounce the right of marriage in order that they might share in the privileges of spiritual fatherhood and motherhood as priests, Brothers,

and Sisters. . . For these, indeed, bring spiritual life to souls. . . Blessed Mother, if I am to be one of these, give me the grace to follow the call of your Divine Son. . . Help me to give to the world the example of perfect virginal chastity. . .

If, on the other hand, I am called to the marriage state, help me to preserve chastity of soul and body before marriage and, in the marriage state, to be truly faithful to my spouse until death. . .

Help me, sweet Mother, to develop the true concept of chastity: that it is watching over a sacred trust. . . that it is sharing with God the power of creating life. . .

Bring back to the world, dearest Mother, the proper understanding of the beauty, dignity, sacredness, tremendousness of sex. . . a power to be used according to God's law. . . a power to be used legitimately only in marriage. . . How many in the world today use sex to base purposes and thereby betray the trust God has placed in them. . . Even your own children who possess the true faith fall victims to the false maxims of the world. . . they become traitors to you and your Son. . . they begin to view things of sex lightly. . . they easily condone such things as petting, necking, pre-marital experiences, birth control, and other sins against

chastity. . . They even make nothing of divorce and re-marriage. . .

Give me a strong conviction that God has implanted an inherent dignity in my body. . . He has given me a tremendous assignment in life. . . The world knows I am a Catholic. . . The world expects more from me than from others and thus pays an unconscious tribute to my faith. . . It may actually encourage sins of lust or at least pretend to do so, but it is shocked when Catholics tell suggestive stories. . . read indecent literature . . . are guilty of indecent actions. . . Am I one of those who scandalize my fellow-men by their conduct?. . .

Enkindle in me, Virgin Mother, a strong love for chastity. . . Temptation surrounds me on every side. . . books. . . papers. . . magazines . . . posters. . . movies. . . I know I'm weak and I need your help. . . Let prayerful thought build up in me strong convictions. . . Virgin of Virgins, I want chastity. . . make me truly chaste in body and mind. . . keep my thoughts, words, and deeds clean. . . Of myself I can do nothing, but your Son Jesus makes men and women pure. . . He made Magdalen a saint. . . He changed Augustine to a holy man. . . Jesus is in the Mass. . . in Holy Communion. . . there I can find Him in the Bread of the strong and in the Wine that makes virgins. . . Keep me close to Him and to you and I shall always be safe. . .

2. The Visitation – – – – Love of Neighbor. . . . .

By the mystery of your visit to Elizabeth, Zachary, and the unborn John the Baptist, obtain for me true charity for my neighbor. . .

Blessed Virgin Mary, my Mother, you had a special mission to perform when you went into the hill country. . . It was not simply to help your cousin Elizabeth who was about to give birth to a child. . . It was to bring the sanctifying influence of Jesus within you into contact with the unborn Precursor. . . Elizabeth's child "leaped" within her womb in recognition of His Master and Redeemer. . . The unborn Jesus cleansed John from original sin before his birth. . .

Thus you show your love for your neighbor throughout your life, blessed Mother. . . In Nazareth, at Bethlehem, in Egypt, wherever you are, you are ready to give a willing hand to anyone in need of help. . . you give of your poverty. . . you console those who are in grief . . . you are kind in every way. . .

You make no exception. . . you love all men . . . you love even those who show such monstrous hatred toward your divine Son. . . Your love for men is but the overflowing of your love for God. . .

Help me, dear Mother, to realize that all men

are my neighbors: not only the family next door or my special friends and relatives. . . but the family down the block. . . the family across the tracks. . . the Negroes who don't get a break. . . the Jews. . . the hill-billies and the share-croppers. . . the Russians and their Godless leaders. . . the persecutors of Christ's Church . . . and even the remotest individuals on the earth. . . all these are my neighbors. . . There are times, Mother when I shut certain individuals and groups from my thinking and love. . . they are God's children and yours. . . they are my brothers and sisters according to the spirit. . . Your Son made no distinction. . . He died for all . . . We are all one blood. . .

Teach me, Blessed Mother, to *think* kindly of my neighbor. . . always to judge his intentions to be good. . . not to indulge in false suspicions . . . to excuse him when he is obviously wrong . . . to consider his good qualities and abilities . . . to minimize his bad qualities. . . to give him credit for the good that he does. . . to forgive injuries. . . to bear no resentment. . .

Show me how to *speak* kindly of my neighbor: not to indulge in idle gossip about him. . . not to spread rumors. . . not to make known his faults . . . to praise him for the good he has done. . . to give him encouragement. . . to defend his reputation. . . to speak well of him at all times...

Teach me, dear Mother, to *act* kindly toward my neighbor: to be thoughtful and considerate in my dealings with him. . . to help him out in his needs. . . to be willing to lend assistance. . . to be generous in pardoning any slights, real or imaginary. . . to help out the poor and the unfortunate. . . to develop a true community spirit and to interest myself in what is going on in the community. . . to bring the faith to those who don't have it. . . to strengthen it in my fellow-Catholics. . . to help the foreign and home missions. . . to give good example. . .

Let me *pray* for my neighbor. . . for all friends and enemies. . . for the living. . . for the souls in Purgatory. . . for the dying. . . for the conversion of sinners. . . for the unity of Christendom . . . for peace in the world. . . for the Holy Father. . . the bishops and priests. . . all Catholics. . .

I will perform at least one special act of kindness today. . .

3. The Birth of Our Lord— — — — The Spirit of Poverty. . . . .

Blessed Mother Mary, your Son, Who is Creator of the universe, the Lord of all things, to Whom all belongs and is subject, is not born into the world in the midst of grandeur, magnificence, and wealth. . . He barely has a place to be born in. . . He has been rejected by His own. . . His own receive Him not. . . He is born in a cave, surrounded by animals. . . He dies, deprived of everything. . . He is stripped of His clothes. . . His deathbed is the Cross. . . He has no grave to call His own. . . He borrows one for the few days He is to remain dead. . .

Your heart grieves, dear Mother, that you have so little to provide Him with when He comes into the world. . . You pay the price of the poor when you redeem Him in the Temple. . . You have only a poor home in Nazareth to give Him . . . He is the Foster-Son of a poor carpenter. . . All is neat but all is poor. . .

All through your life, Mother Mary, you are to us a model of poverty in imitation of your Divine Son, Who is Himself poor. . . Often He has no where to lay His head. . . He loves the poor because of His compassion for them. . . He loves them because they are nearer to His Soul,. . . more prepared to understand Him than other men. . .

Obtain for me, Blessed Mother, the spirit of poverty, for this is the condition of my entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. . . Your Son said so and He is Truth. . . "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Permeated as I am with the world's thinking this may sound difficult to me. . . It is so contrary to what I hear around me: "get ahead", "be independent", "make your fortune quickly", "try to retire at fifty". . . The world doesn't even seem to care how a person comes by his wealth. . . it winks at a little "chiselling" here and there. . . crooked methods. . . "deals". . . shady procedures. . . and all the other tricks of the trade. . . The great sin is to *get caught*. . . The world sets such store by riches as though these were the only things of value in life. . .

Your Son castigated the rich and declared how hard it is for them to get to heaven. . . Does the acquiring of wealth imply eternal damnation? . . . If I am not to make profession of religious poverty, how can I practice Christian poverty? . . . Is there any inconsistency between my desire for reasonable security and Christ's precept of poverty in spirit?. . .

As I examine into the question, I realize that earthly goods. . . property. . . are attached to my right to life. . . that material things must be put to good use. . . that I must not be inordinately

attached to them. . . I must see that, to the Christian, earthly goods are good in themselves . . . that they are a means of sustaining life. . . that they are to be used for God's purposes. . . I see, on the other hand, how easily I can become attached to them, so that riches become an end in themselves so that I misuse them for wrong ends and thus commit sin and lose God. . .

Sweet Mother, by your blessed poverty and that of your Son Jesus, obtain for me a spirit of detachment from the goods of this world, so that I may use them as God wills me to use them but that I must be willing to lose everything rather than the friendship of God. . .

4. The Presentation of Jesus ———— Obedience. . . . .

In this mystery of the Presentation of Jesus and of your Purification, Mother Mary, I have before me a marvellous example of obedience. . .

The Mosaic Law prescribed that a mother come to the Temple for the ceremony of purification after the birth of her child. . . But you are a Virgin in the birth of Jesus. . . therefore, you need no cleansing. . . Yet you submit to the Law. . .

Furthermore, your Son is God, the Lawgiver,

and as such, is above the Law. . . Yet He is obedient to the Law. . . It is His wish that you follow the requirements of the Law by presenting Him and redeeming Him as your first-born. . .

I must be frank with you, dear Mother, and admit that I find it difficult to obey in a great many situations. . . I seem to think that I'm old enough to have a mind of my own and to be able to judge what is the right thing to be done. . . I seem to resent almost any kind of authority that is exercised over me. . . I don't like any kind of regulation but want to do whatever I please. . . I'm afraid I have the wrong idea of freedom. . .

Help me, sweet Mother, to take the *view of faith*. . . this is most important in the matter of obedience. . . I recognize, without any difficulty, that I must obey God. . . this is evident. . . He has created me and therefore I am completely dependent upon Him. . . I must submit my will to His. . .

By this very token, I must obey God's lawful representatives. . . God does not speak to me directly but delegates His authority to His creatures. . . I am born to live in society. . . this cannot exist without some authority to unite the members in their efforts toward the common good. . . To obey lawful authority is to obey God. . .

Your Son delegated His authority to the Apostles and their successors in the Church. . . The Church exists to teach. . . to govern. . . to sanctify. . . It is through the means placed at my disposal by the Church that I work out my salvation and sanctification. . . Help me, Blessed Mother, to become very closely attached to my parish. . . the gateway of grace. . . Let me give heed to the teachings of the priests who are charged with my soul's salvation. . . Make me an exemplary parishioner. . . through frequent reception of the sacraments. . . participation in the apostolic activities of the parish. . . co-operation with my priests. . . Guide our Bishop and every Bishop in the world. . . Bless and protect our Holy Father especially in these difficult times. . . Let me see in him the living Christ on earth. . .

Let me be truly subject to those who have temporal authority over me. . . Make me realize that I must be interested in civil government and seek to use my influence to secure the best possible persons in office. . . I will be interested in local community affairs. . . government. . . police and fire protection. . . the schools. . . recreation. . . and so on in every aspect of community life. . . Guide those that have responsibility on every level of government. . . Let them not use their offices to serve their own

selfish ends but teach them to seek only the common good. . .

Bless and direct my teachers. . . my employers . . . and any others that have rights over me. . .

Especially I beg you, sweetest Mother, to bless mother and dad. . . For me, they are the best in the world. . . You had the most wonderful Son on earth. . . Make me to be toward them what Jesus was toward you. . . They have fed me. . . clothed me. . . sheltered me. . . educated me. . . guided me. . . safeguarded and protected me. . . sacrificed for me. . . Help me to repay them in some slight measure for all they have done for me. . . Help me to show my love for them by every manifestation of kindness and consideration . . . Teach me to *obey* them faithfully in all that they command me to do. . . Let me show *reverence* for them by acknowledging their dignity in every way. . .

Today I will check over carefully to see whether my obedience is all that it should be with regard to all that have any authority over me. . .

5. Jesus is Found in the Temple – – – –
Fervor. . . .

O Blessed Mother, your sorrow at the loss of Jesus reminds me of the grief and emptiness of my soul if I should lose Jesus by sin. . . Your joy on finding Him is that of the soul to whom grace is restored. . .

While Jesus is away from you and Joseph during those three days He remains in the Temple, how is He occupied?. . . He tells you that Himself: "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?". . .

This, dear Mother, must also be my great pre-occupation in life. . . to be about the heavenly Father's business. . . this is to seek His glory . . . to work out my salvation. . . I am made *by* God and *for* God. . . In Him is my *beginning* and my *end*. . . In Him, I live. . . and move. . . and have my being. . .

Your whole life, like that of Jesus, was completely God-centered. . . Show me, Mother, how to forget myself and my own interests that my life may be wholly lived for God. . . Let me come to grips with the conviction that I am a real Christ-bearer, that I am to make Christ's business, not only my business but that of all the world. . . I must be interested not only in my own salvation and sanctification but in that of

all with whom I come into contact. . . Mother Mary, your heart burned with zeal for the cause of your Son. . . make mine also burn with fervor and intensity in this same cause. . . Let no obstacles or difficulties discourage me. . .

Dear Mother, don't let me be just an ordinary so-so Catholic. . . one who follows the routine of Mass and the sacraments with the rest of the crowd. . . one who is afraid he might get too holy if he is in Church too often. . . Am I one of these mediocre Catholics. . . who tries to get through Mass on Sunday in a hurry and is impatient if the priest preaches too long. . . who slips out during Communion. . . who rarely or never goes to week-day Mass even though it is possible. . . who is very weak about confession and Communion?. . . For these there is no sense of the beautiful liturgy of the Church. . . religion is nothing to get excited about. . . grace is no supernatural reality to them. . . Am I one of these? It's easy to be just average. . . to get into a groove. . . to drift along. . . to take my faith for granted. . . to follow the crowd. . .

Let me rather have the unrest. . . the energy . . . the fervor. . . the zeal of yourself and of all the saints in growing in holiness and in being interested in the growth in holiness of others.

1. The Agony in the Garden – – – –
Contrition for Sin. . . . .

Sorrowful Mother, it is my sins and the sins of all mankind that crushed Jesus to the ground in His Agony in the Garden of Olives, pressed the Precious Blood from His Body, and caused it to trickle to the ground. . . How overwhelming and oppressing must be the weight of these sins. . . Day by day, we pile sin upon sin, iniquity upon iniquity, and give no heed to the warnings of your Divine Son. . .

I believe the world has pretty well lost the sense of sin. . . It laughs at what it calls prudishness. . . All morality is something merely relative depending upon the viewpoint of society . . . So-called teachers and leaders bid men get rid of the "old superstitions" with regard to morals. . . cast all restraint aside. . . Some deliberately and diabolically set out to corrupt youth by every device that will break down the barriers, weaken their wills, and appeal to the lowest elements of their nature. . . Even religious non-Catholics hardly ever think of making an act of contrition for their sins. . . many things are not even any longer regarded as sins because

as is said, "everybody is doing it". . . Do some of us Catholics tend to lose the sense of sin because we, too, fall victims to the secularism around us that has rejected God and His Law. . .

Let me see sin in its true light as the great *mystery of evil,* as the only true evil in the world. . . the evil that would seek to destroy God if it could. . . Wars, disease, poverty, disaster. . . these are not evil compared with sin. . . Sometimes they are the result of sin. . . Sin is the great evil of separation from God. . . it is hell begun on earth. . .

Sin is the *great rebellion*. . . Each time I sin, I repeat the words of the angels who revolted against God: "I will not serve". . . I take to myself creatures and use them as though they were mine. . . I form my mind, my will, my powers, to my own ends. . . I seek myself instead of God. . . my own satisfaction before all else. . . my own pleasure before God's will. . .

Sin is the *terrible choice*. . . the abuse of my will which is given me to seek and choose the great Good, God Himself. . . and in place of the only Good, I seek trifles. . . toys. . . my own pleasure. . .

O Blessed Mother of Sorrows, you share with Jesus the great Agony over my sins and the sins of the world. . . Plead with Jesus for the forgiveness of my sins. . . I recognize that I am a

sinner. . . I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed. . . Each evil thought has pressed a thorn more deeply into the brow of Christ. . . each evil word has added another bruising blow to His parched lips. . . each evil deed fashions a nail to be driven into the sacred hands and feet of my Savior. . .

Sweetest Mother, pray for me that Jesus will forgive me the sins of omission and commission of which I am guilty. . . Develop in me a great horror and fear and sorrow for sin. . . Remind me each night to make a perfect act of contrition. . . Obtain for me the grace of dying in the peace of the Lord. . .

Mother of mercy, look with compassion upon upon all sinners. . . the weak ones. . . the obstinate and hardened ones. . . Bring them to seek the forgiveness of your Son and to live again His life in themselves. . .

2. *The Scourging — — — — Penance. . . . .*

O Blessed Mother, how could Jesus endure the sufferings of His scourging?. . . He suffered for us in His flesh in order to bring home to us the necessity of doing penance and of accepting the sufferings that come to us in our lives. . .

The primary function of your Son is that of

Redeemer. . . for this He came into the world, to atone for the sins of mankind and to reconcile it to the heavenly Father. . . He continues this function down through the ages. . . His act of atonement finds its constant repetition in every Mass and in the sacraments through which His Precious Blood is applied to each soul. . .

Your Son, dear Mary, is driven out of His own world. . . which He made. . . and upon which He has showered His blessings. . . He is even being driven out of our own nation. . . supposedly a Christian people. . . but, day by day, it is allowing itself to fall under the control of secularists . . . who wish to rule religion out of every phase of man's private or public life. . . Jesus is being driven out of the family, which should be the stronghold of love and unity. . . Jesus is being driven out of the individual soul, who no longer sees himself as His brother and destined to live forever with Him in heaven. . .

Blessed Mother, pity mankind. . . Men, even Catholics, forget the meaning and the necessity of penance for sin. . . yet Jesus has told us that, without it, we shall perish. . . Men flout it. . . ridicule it. . . think of nothing but their comfort and ease. . . try to escape even the slightest suffering or inconvenience. . .

How will the hands of your Son's justice be stayed, O Mother, unless there are souls. . .

generous souls. . . who will offer themselves as victims of reparation for the sins of mankind?. . .

I offer myself in union with your own sufferings as such a victim to sacrifice myself for the love of Jesus and of souls. . . I know that there is endless need of prayer for the conversion of sinners. . . the triumph of your Son's interests on earth. . . and the exaltation of the Church. . . I offer through your hands, sweet Mother, the Precious Blood of Jesus to the Most Blessed Trinity. . .

I will do penance for my own sins by which I revolted against God and His infinite perfections . . . turned against Him all His blessings. . . and was guilty of the basest ingratitude. . .

I wish also to do penance for the sins of others. . . in union with your reparation and that of many holy souls in the world. . . May I console Jesus as you did, as Veronica and the holy women did. . . Take the wounds, the blood, the love, the merits of Jesus to touch the Heavenly Father and obtain pardon for sinners. . .

I wish to offer expiation, dear Mother, by the tears of my heart. . . by my fidelity. . . by patience . . . by a true spirit of religion. . . and by love. . . I wish to offer expiation, blessed Mary, by you . . . by the rosary. . . by suffering. . . by all your merits, virtues, and love. . . Help me to transform myself into Jesus in such a manner that He will

come to suffer in me, in reality, that which He can no longer suffer except mystically on the altar. . .

3. The Crowning with Thorns — — — — Humility. . . . .

This particular phase of your Son's Passion, Blessed Mother of Sorrows, as does every aspect of His life, stresses the lowly virtue of humility . . . Jesus, King of the universe, Lord of Men's souls, is humbled to the very dust by His own creatures, whom He could have crushed and reduced to nothingness by a mere act of His will. . . But He submitted to their ridicule. . . their insults. . . their blasphemy. . . All through His life, He is willing to occupy an inferior position, to be hidden, unknown, despised, disregarded. . . at His birth in Bethlehem. . . His hidden life in Nazareth. . . even in His public life when He loves to associate with the poor, the unfortunate, the sinner. . . He loves the poor because they are humble. . . He loves children because they are simple, straightforward. . .

Dear Mother, you are the perfect pattern modeled after Christ's own humility. . . You are chosen Mother of the Messias because of your

humility as well as your virginity. . . You call yourself the handmaid of the Lord. . . God looked upon the lowliness of His handmaiden in order to work great things in you. . . You recognize that all that is in you is from God. . . You refer all the good in you back to God. . .

I need to learn this great lesson of humility which you and Jesus teach me, holy Mother Mary . . . I shall never in my life have to undergo the great humiliations which you and Jesus endured. . .

Help me to start with the basic concept of faith that I am from God. . . that I depend on God for my existence. . . and for all that I am and have. . . There is no good in me except that it comes from God. . . How can I think of myself as being something or having something of myself?. . . How can I be proud or conceited in my dealings with others?. . . Too often I cloak pride under the guise of legitimate self-esteem, when, in reality, it is an exaggerated self-love . . . self-interest. . . self-centeredness. . . selfishness. . .

Mother Mary, like your Jesus, you are meek and humble of heart. . . make me like unto you . . . turn on me your eyes of pity and compassion . . . Make me truly humble in that I recognize that what I am and have is from God. . .

I will seek God in all things. . . I will never

seek self. . . I will try to hide my good qualities . . . to avoid human praise. . . to turn attention from myself. . . to think little of the good that I have done. . . to think rather of the good still to be done. . . to choose less desired positions. . . to love the poor and the lowly. . . to give glory and credit only to God. . .

4. The Carrying of the Cross— — — — Patience. . . . .

Blessed Mother of Sorrows, you would have been most willing to take the place of your Divine Son as He carried His Cross to Calvary . . . Among the crowds along the Way of Sorrows there are so few to console Him. . . But Jesus wishes to show me that the disciple cannot be above the Master. . . In order to be a true disciple of His, I must take up my cross daily and follow Him. . .

You and your Son give me the most marvellous example of patience. . . Jesus, in carrying His Cross. . . you, in suffering along with Him. . .

Dear Mother, give me a true understanding of *suffering*. . . Let me take my cross to follow Christ, my Leader, who became man and shed His own Blood in order to undo that horrible thing which is sin. . . If I do not understand the

meaning of moral evil or sin, I shall be a whimpering coward who balks at sickness or any bodily pain. . . If I make no account of sin I shall try to escape any inconvenience and trouble. . . I may grow bitter, hate God, call Him cruel, or even deny His existence. . . Such is the case of those who don't want to understand suffering in relation to moral evil. . .

Don't let me lose the sense of sin, sweet sinless Mother. . . Let me see it clearly as pride . . . rebellion. . . ingratitude. . . the loss of God's friendship. . . the great evil. . . Let me take up my cross with Jesus. . . the cross of daily suffering. . . Thus I shall become like to Christ . . . I know that the cross Jesus gives me to bear will never be too heavy for me. . . Jesus will give me the help to carry it. . . in fact, He will carry the heavy portion of the burden. . .

Let me see in suffering a purifying agent. . . Through it, I can get rid of self-love which is the great obstacle to my love to Christ. . . through it, I become more like my Master and my Mother . . . through it, I can offer expiation for my sins and the sins of others. . .

Obtain for me, blessed Mother, the grace to be patient in all the trying situations of my life . . . let me keep the suffering Christ before my eyes. . . let me not complain or murmur against God but let me endure sickness and physical

sufferings. . . inconveniences, trials, and difficulties. . . reverses of fortune and poverty. . . the loss of relatives and friends. . . misunderstandings, injustice, ingratitude, insults, anger, rudeness, bad manners on the part of others. . . my own faults and defects of character. . . my lack of intelligence, my temperament, irritability, bad habits, failings, lack of spiritual progress. . .

Help me, dear Mother, to walk along side your Son, carrying my cross with Him. . . taking courage from His example and love. . . This day, I will particularly carry a special cross which Christ may send me. . .

By the merits of the falls of Jesus on the way to Calvary, help me to rise quickly if I should fall into sin. . . never let me grow discouraged or lose confidence. . . Let me give to others the example of what a Christian should be in the midst of suffering and adversity. . .

Merciful Mother, have pity on those who are undergoing persecutions for your Son's sake. . .

5. The Crucifixion — — — — Perseverance. . . . .

Mother of the Crucified, through the mystery of your Son's death upon the Cross, obtain for me the grace of perseverance, that is, the grace of dying a holy and happy death. . .

Your Son, born in the obscurity of a cave, has to die in the most public manner possible. . . in the sight of all mankind, so to say. . . His death is the completion of the Redemption of men. . . His is not an easy death. . . He refuses anything that would in the least diminish His physical sufferings. . . There is no human aid possible that can alleviate His mental agonies. .

Jesus has come to the end of His life. . . He is to die after suffering the worst tortures hanging on the Cross for three hours. . . Mother Mary, filled with bitterest sorrow, you stand there with heroic courage. . . you die morally with Him. . . Jesus can look back upon His life and His work and say: "It is finished". . . His life seems to have been a failure. . . The very ones whom He comes to save try to destroy Him and His work and yet it is in this very failure that He successfully finishes His work . . . He could then resignedly commend His spirit into the hands of His Heavenly Father. . .

Your Son, Blessed Mary, declares that he who perseveres to the end shall be saved. . .

I need your help urgently to keep going on to the end. . .It seems such a struggle to keep going day by day. . .yet I must hold on at all costs. . .It is that last moment of my life that is most significant. . .My whole eternity will depend upon the state of my soul at the moment when I am called into the next life. . .Shall I be in the state of grace or in the state of mortal sin at that instant?. . .Shall I have an opportunity to make my peace with God?. . .This is the important question. . .

I don't know how long I have yet to live. . . I try to fool myself that I'm still young and have a long life ahead of me. . .Perhaps in my case it may be true. . .But if I pick up today's paper or any day's, for that matter, I'll find so many of my age killed in auto accidents, in war, by drowning, heart attacks, and so on. . .Death is no respecter of age. . .When my time comes, God will send the Angel of Death to take me. . . The second that I pass out of this world, I am judged and my position is determined forever. . . there can be no change of sentence. . .It will be heaven or hell. . .eternal happiness and union with God or eternal misery and separation from God. . .

Perseverance, dearest Mother Mary, is something that I must earn day by day.

GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

1. The Resurrection – – – –
Supernatural Life. . . . .

Glorious Mother, through the merits of Christ's resurrection from the dead, confirm my faith, strengthen my hope, inflame my love. . . Each time I meditate on this mystery assist me to a rebirth in the supernatural life. . .

Help me, sweet Mother Mary, full of grace, to a realization of what the state of grace, the life of Christ is in me, for it is this that Jesus earned for us by His Death and Resurrection. . . Too many of us have a negative idea of sanctifying grace. . . the freedom from serious sin. . . No, dear Mother, it is something excitingly positive . . . it is Jesus dwelling in me. . . it is the life of Christ in me. . . I can say, "Jesus keeps me company". . . "It is Jesus who lives in me". . . I have the assurance from your Divine Son: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.". . . These words were said by the same Lord Who said "This is My Body". . . This is the Divine Indwelling, in which God remains with me and every creature every moment of the day and night, from the

moment of baptism to the moment of death, if He is not driven out through mortal sin. . . Your Son, O Mary, Who had His most perfect indwelling in you. . . for there was no obstacle to His presence. . . seeks to be with me and in me. . .

O Mary, full of grace, make me to discover the marvellous reality that I carry within myself without realizing it. . . In eternity I shall be astounded and cry out in amazement at this overwhelming fact of the Divine Indwelling. . . I am a ciborium of the Holy Trinity. . . I am a Christopher, a Christ-bearer, in the full sense of the word. . . I have found heaven on earth, since heaven is God and I have God in my soul. . .

Here is the great truth: JESUS LIVES IN ME . . . This is the truth of faith indeed but I haven't as yet formed solid convictions on the subject . . . How different my life would be if I were firmly rooted in faith and fully believed that your Son is truly within me. . . My life would become divine. . . My thoughts. . . my feelings. . . my affections. . . my will. . . my actions would all have the divine stamp. . . Men, looking at me, would sense the difference. . . They would recognize that your Son really lives in me. . . I should, in a sense, become divine. . .

Holy Mary, you are my Mother in all truth. . . You have brought me forth to this supernatural life as a member of Christ's Mystical Body. . .

You have only one desire and that is to form me and all other men to the image of Christ and to a true participation in the life of Jesus. . . Make me another Christ. . .

2. *The Ascension* – – – – *Otherworldliness*. . . . .

Blessed Mother, there must have been a mingling of joy and sadness as Jesus left you to return to His Father in heaven. . . The years you spent together were years of intense happiness. . . there were periods too of intense grief and sorrow. . . Now there can be no more sorrow for heaven excludes it. . . It is to be only a matter of time when Jesus will bring you body and soul to be with Him in heaven. . . By the grace of Christ's Ascension help me to keep my sights fixed on heaven and to develop in myself a spirit of *otherworldliness*. . .

Your Son frequently speaks about the world and the attitude I should have toward it. . . He would convict the world of sin, of judgment, and of justice. . . I must not be of the world, though of it. . . I must be crucified to the world. . . I must hate the world. . . What does Jesus here mean by the world?

It is not, sweet Mother, the people in the

world. . . these I must love as my neighbors. . . It is rather those things for which the world stands and those people who are infested by and give expression to the vicious principles of the world. . . that part of the trio of world, flesh, and devil. . . This is to what your Son refers. . . the evil principles that go counter to His spirit. . . what we today call secularism. . . a materialistic, temporal outlook on life that involves the rejection of God and of His Christ . . . the world of sin. . . the world that hates the Church. . . that speaks against you, dear Mother. . . that maligns the Holy Father, the vicar of Christ on earth. . . There are men today in this country, Blessed Mary, who make a good living trying to keep souls of good will away from the Church by claiming that no good Catholic can be a good American. . . There are also the many others who carry on the work of Satan by leading young persons away from the path of goodness by breaking down their moral fiber. . .

Keep me, Mother, from all spiritual harm. . . Instead of being affected by the principles of the world, let me exert a positive influence for good on those with whom I come into contact. . . Let me set up my standards according to my holy faith. . . I know how easy it is to turn from Christ or to try to water down His teachings in the face of the many whom the world has in its

grip. . . I may be influenced by the narrowminded thinking of grownups and young people about me, who reflect the general religious indifference of our American society. . . They take a stand consistently against that of the Church. . . they have no supernatural outlook. . . religion must have no place in men's affairs and least of all, in such strategic areas as government, business, education, communication, recreation. . . I can see that often people act as if there were no God, no Christ, no Church which Christ established. . .

Help me, Mother Mary, to judge all things in the light of God, of faith, and of eternity. . . Teach me the true purpose of life. . . the meaning of death. . . the value of suffering. . . the place of charity, humility, and justice in my life. . . Let me see in events the plan of God and, in the voice of conscience, the answer to the important question: what does God think of this?. . .

3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit – – – – The Marian Apostolate. . . .

Blessed Mother, on Pentecost Day, the Holy Spirit comes upon you and the Apostles in the upper room where you had awaited His coming . . . Once before, He had descended upon you to bring about the Incarnation of the Word of God in your blessed womb. . . This time, His coming initiates the great work of the Church to bring Christ and His grace to souls. . . to continue the redemptive action of the Savior in the soul of each individual. . . Is it not for this that you have become the Mother of God as well as the Mother of Men?. . .

What a transformation takes place in the Apostles as soon as the Holy Spirit takes possession of them! No longer timid, fearful, ignorant men but courageous, enlightened, enthusiastic for the spread of Christ's Kingdom . . . Nothing can stop them now. . . They have a message. . . they have grace and holiness to bring to men. . . they are willing to brave death for the Great Cause. . .

You have an apostolic role, blessed Mother, in which you need my assistance. . . You call me to be an apostle with the same functions and with all the zeal and enthusiasm of the Apostles who surrounded you on Pentecost. . . You wish

me to place myself under your leadership in your combat against evil. . . You are shown to our first parents in the Garden as the Immaculate Virgin. . . the Woman who would crush the head of the serpent. . . This you do not only in giving birth to the Redeemer but in the battle against evil that goes on until the end of time. . . In each age, you show yourself the Conquering Woman. . . At first, this idea of battle and conflict seems so out of kilter with our thought of you as so incomparably sweet, mild, and compassionate. . .

Today the great heresy is secularism, religious indifference, progressive apostasy. . . Already through your manifestations at Fatima you show yourself the living symbol of the victory of truth over error, of faith over unbelief. . .

Mother, you want me to be one of your apostles . . . Accept me for what I'm worth. . . I give you my feeble talents and my poor but generous efforts. . . In whatever capacity you wish me to serve, I can do a great deal to carry on your cause, provided I'm willing. . . Let me see my vocation and follow it through. . . Give me the fervor and fire of youth kindled by the Holy Spirit. . .

Make me a man of faith. . . one who knows his faith. . . who loves his faith. . . who lives his faith. . . Make mine an apostolate of good

example so that men will be drawn through me to you and your Divine Son. . . In all things, Immaculate Queen, I am at your disposal. . . Do with me what you want. . .

Raise up a great supply of apostles to carry on the tremendous work that still needs to be done. . .

4. *The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin* – – – – *Union with Mary.* . . . .

Blessed Mother Mary, your Jesus lives closely united with you during His life with you on earth. . . His is a *corporal union* with you during the nine months in which His humanity is being formed of your virginal substance. . . a close union during the first thirty years of His life in Bethlehem, Egypt, Nazareth. . . Come to save men from sin, He gives you ten times more time than He gives the rest of humanity. . . He sees you as often as possible during His public mission. . . a solemn union as He redeems men on Calvary. . . daily union from Pentecost on in the breaking of the bread. . . eternal union from the moment of your Assumption. . .

More intimate than this is the *spiritual union* of your Son with you. . . From all eternity the Word of God thinks of you. . . From the fall of

man, He thinks of you to share with Him in the redemption of mankind. . . As a child and young man, Jesus thinks of you, beyond anything anyone of us could dream of. . . You are the great object of your Son's love. . . upon you He bestows His graces. . . loving you, how could He help thinking of you in His private life and all through His public life?. . . You, His Mother, are also the Mother most faithful. . . the most loyal and devoted follower. . .

At no time can two hearts be found that are so completely one as yours and His. . . Love of the Father. . . love of men. . . same loves. . . same desires. . . same joys. . . same sorrows . . . and now, eternal happiness in each other's company. . .

If Jesus and you are so united in thought and feeling, you are especially united in *will*. . . Jesus' will is always to do the will of the Father. . . Your will all through your life is ever in conformity with your Son's. . . Union of wills implies union of *action*. . . He becomes your Son, the God-Man, because He loves us and wishes to die that we may live the life of grace and be made fit inhabitants of heaven. . . You are to be the Co-Redemptrix. . . After His death, you continue to watch over His Church. . . And now, in heaven, in union with Jesus, you are concerned with your great mission as universal

Mediatrix. . .

Mother Mary, obtain for me the precious grace of imitating Christ's union with you. . . By this union, I can come most easily to the fulfillment of my duties and to true holiness. . . I consecrate myself wholly and lovingly to you. . . In this holy union with you, Blessed Mother, I will strive. . .

to know you better by constant study and meditation. . .

to grow day by day in love for you. . .

to place my full trust in you. . .

to honor you. . .

to imitate you. . .

to burn with an ever increasing ardor and to spend myself in your service. . .

to keep you constantly in my thoughts. . .

to unite myself to you in joy and sorrow, success and failure, and in every circumstance of my life. . .

to conform my will with yours, in the knowledge that my will will thus always be aligned with the will of your Son. . .

5. *The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin* — — — — *Filial Piety Toward Mary*. . . . .

Glorious Queen of heaven and earth, while I am dazzled by the splendor of your greatness, I know that I can approach you with love and confidence. . . I have nothing to fear, because no one fears his mother, and you are my Mother and the Mother of all men. . . Throughout eternity you are being honored by your dear Son as well as by all the angels and saints in heaven. . .

Devotion to you, glorious Mother, is one of the signs of eternal salvation. . . My life is devoted to you and is to be distinguished by a special devotion to you. . . In fact, I desire that my special devotion to you will be more than a devotion. . . I want it to be *a way of life,* a *Marian way of life*. . . Such it can become, for it is your own Son Who communicates it to me. . .

By becoming the Mother of Jesus, the Mother of the Head of the Mystical Body, you conceive us also at the Incarnation as members of this Mystical Body. . . On Calvary you give birth to the Mystical Body. . .

With Christ, I must be another Christ. . . another son of yours. . . I must be formed by you to resemble your Son. . . For me and for every Christian, *child of Mary* must mean the same as saint. . . It is your ambition that all the children

which your charity brings forth after your Son, Jesus, must be so united with Him, that with Him, they may be but one son. . . one and the same Christ. . .

I am another Christ, another child of yours. . . You seek to form me to the likeness of Christ . . . Therefore, as another Christ, I must take on the sentiments, the attitudes of Jesus toward you. . .

I must share in Christ's *filial piety* toward you. . . This embraces all the traits of Jesus in His relations to you. . . What kind of a Son is your Jesus?. . . He is the perfect Son, the perfect Model. . . If I share in His devotion to you then I must have the perfect devotion. . .

Like Jesus, I will strive to fulfill toward you all the obligations of a truly devoted and loving son. . .

I will place myself in your hands to be formed . . . nourished. . . reared by you. . . Thus I can become a saint. . .

I will seek to know you better. . . to love you . . . obey you. . . honor you. . . imitate you. . . to confide in you. . . to live in union with you. . .

I will try, to the utmost of my power, to cooperate with you in your mission of bringing souls to Christ. . .

To this end, I consecrate myself entirely to you. . . I want to be yours.

Indulgences Attached to the Saying of the Rosary

For five decades of the Rosary:

1. An indulgence of five years when recited privately; an indulgence of ten years once a day, when recited with others in common. (S. Paen. Ap., March 18, 1932)

2. A plenary indulgence whenever recited before the Blessed Sacrament, on condition of Confession and Communion. (Breve, Sept. 4, 1927)

3. To these indulgences are to be added such as can be gained by using beads blessed by the Dominican Fathers, or other priests having the same powers.

Indulgences Attached to Blessed Rosaries

Have your rosary blessed so that you may gain as many indulgences as possible. Apply to a priest who has the faculties to attach the various indulgences to your rosary.

CROSIER BLESSING: Five hundred days are granted for each Our Father and Hail Mary, even if only a few are said.

DOMINICAN BLESSING: Those who, while thinking over the mysteries, recite five decades in the course of the day, may gain an indulgence of 100 days for each Our Father and Hail Mary, and five years for each group of five decades.

Those who have been registered as members of the Rosary Confraternity may gain many other indulgences. To become a member it is necessary to send your name to a place where the Confraternity is erected. Your beads must be blessed by a priest having the power to impart the Dominican blessing. As a member, you must say fifteen decades a week. These need not be said all at one time, nor even all in one day. Failure to carry out the latter duty does not cancel the membership, nor does it bar one from sharing in the prayers of the other members, but one loses the indulgences attached to the recitation of his rosary.

NOTE: These indulgences are only the principal ones at your disposal for yourself and the departed. Members of the Confraternity can gain many more. For example, members who carry the rosary with them and say five decades a day can gain as much as 366 years' indulgence each day. Pius XI granted a plenary indulgence on the *usual conditions* (given below) for saying five decades of the rosary before the Blessed Sacrament. As the indulgences are too numerous to calculate their total, make the general intention of gaining all that you can. Say the prayers with some movement of the lips. Have the spirit of repentance while saying them, for indulgences remit punishment only for those sins that you regret sincerely.